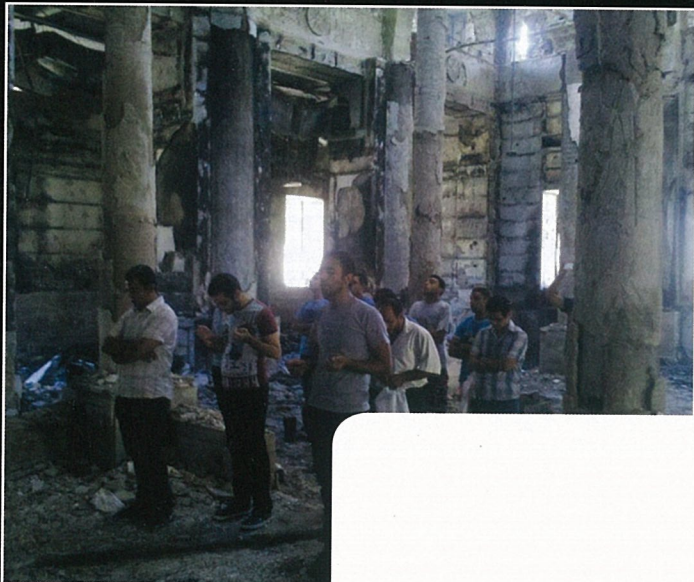
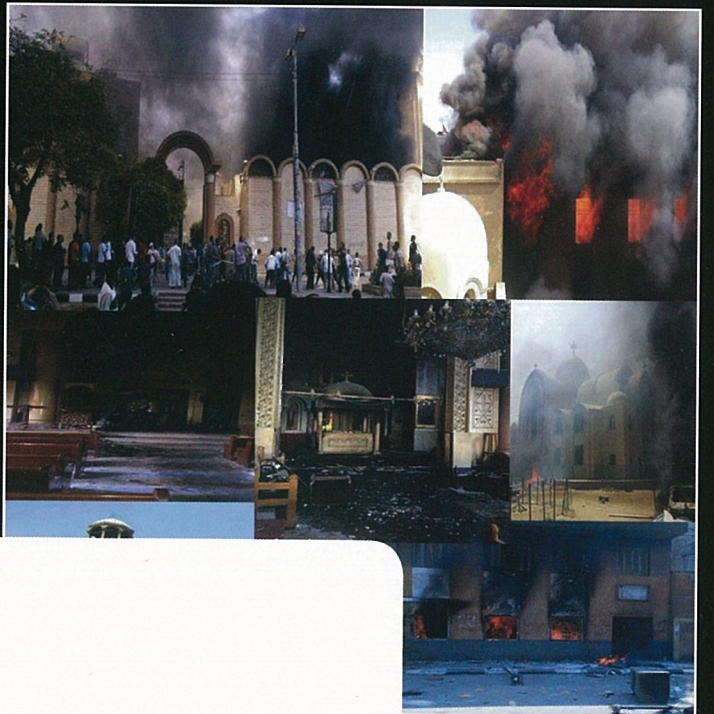


St John

A Coptic Christian Bi Monthly Magazine
Vol 25 No. 276 September/October 2013



Muslim Brotherhood (MB) destroyed 100 churches and Christian Institutes in Egypt within 3 days from August 14 -16, 2013



www.mystjohn.org

Verse of the month:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rome 8 - 35

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SAINT JOHN

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A Christian Coptic Orthodox Bi Monthly Magazine published by St. John Coptic Orthodox Church, 21329 Cienega Ave. Covina, California 91724, a parish of the Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of Egypt under the Papacy of

H.H. Pope Tawadros II.

The 118 Patriarch of Alexandria and 116th successor to the See of St. Mark the Evangelist and the Diocese of Southern California and Hawaii under

H.G. Bishop Serapion.

St. John reflects the Biblical, doctrinal, and spiritual views of the early Church in English and Arabic.

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SCHEDULE of MEETINGS and EVENTS for the MONTH of » September-October 2013

| Sunday | Wednesday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|
| + English Liturgy 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. * * * | + Liturgy 8:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.. | + Liturgy 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. | + Liturgy from 8- 10 am |
| + Arabic Liturgy 8:00 – 11:00 a.m. | + <u>Thursday Morning</u> | +Arabic Youth Meeting 8:00 – 10:00 p.m. | + Vespers; Bible Study 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. |
| + Servants' Meeting 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. | + Senior Citizen Club 11:00 – 4:00 a.m. | | + Beginners' Deacons- Meeting 6: 30 p.m. |
| | Thursday | | + Elementary Meeting 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. |
| | Family Meeting 8:00 – 10::00 p.m. | | + College Youth Meeting 7:30- 9:00 p.m. |
| Teusday | | | + High School & J. High Meetings 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. |
| English-Bible Study 7:30 pm | | | |

Email your articles/comments/requests to Frhanna @mystjohn.org

Or visit us online @ www.mystjohn.org

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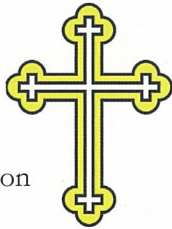
1. Feast of Nyrouz (Coptic New Year 1730):

On Wednesday, September 11, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Nyrouz, also known as the Feast of the Martyrs and the Coptic New Year 1730 of the Christian Martyrs of Egypt (more than a million).

The Feast will be celebrated on Saturday, September 14, at 7:00 p.m. There will be spiritual talks, hymns and other activities.

2. Feast of the Cross' Appearance:

On Friday, September 27, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Appearance of the Holy Cross. Vespers will take place on Thursday the 26th at 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.



3. St. John's Silver Jubilee and Annual Festival (September 27 - 29):

St. John Church in Covina, California celebrates her Silver Jubilee, the passing of 25 years on her establishment by Pope Shenouda's letter on the 22nd of August 1988.

The celebration will take place with the church Annual Festival for 3 days (Friday, September 27 till Sunday, 29). The event is under the auspices of H. G. Bishop Serapion. The program contains daily vespers and morning Liturgies, Book Fair, Mediterranean food, missionary tours for guests and Fund-Raise.

4. New SCHEDULE of Vespers & other meetings:

- Starting after the Coptic New Year, September 12, 2013,
- + Vespers starts from 6:00 -7:00 PM
 - + Hymns Classes (all ages) 5:00 – 6:00 PM
 - + Christian Education Classes 7:00 – 8:00 PM
 - + Midnights Praises 8:00 – 10:00 PM

5. St. John College Group wins the first place:

On Saturday, August 10, St. John Church College group won the first place (the CUP/ Excellent) in the Los Angeles Competition (YSC). Junior High 6,7&8th grade got Very Good.

High School is Very 'Good.

6. H.H. Pope Tawadros II:



+ His Holiness Pope Tawadros postponed (temporarily) his weekly meeting at St. Mark Cathedral, and had a time of solitude in the Monastery for prayer due to the turbulent circumstances in Egypt.

+ The Holy Pontiff declared his support to the Egyptian Military and Police for keeping order in the country and condemned the violence committed by the terrorists and their vicious attacks of burning more than ninety churches, monasteries, homes and Christian institutes in Egypt within three days, from August 14 to 16, 2013! He asked the Copts to pray for their attackers.

7. H.G. Bishop Serapion:



+ On August 14, 2013, His Grace issued a declaration condemning the violence and damage done by terrorist- groups in Egypt against the Christian homes, churches, monasteries and institutions in which they torched and burned down more than 90 churches within 3 days! He

asked the Coptic congregations around the world to unite in fasting and praying and correct the distorted picture of the Western Media about the facts.

+ H.G. the Bishop also blessed the Diocese Annual competition held at St. Athanasius and St. John Churches.

8. St. John Magazine changed to Bi-Monthly:

Due to the drop in the magazine's income, lack of assistance and lack of the youth enthusiasm; it has been decided to turn the magazine from being monthly into by-monthly in order to save effort, money and time.

9. Harvest Festival for children (Halloween):

St. John Church celebrates children Harvest Festival, known as "Halloween", on Thursday, October 31, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. The church explains the historical background of the occasion to the kids and encourages her children and parents to restore the original purpose of the day, and to use good costumes of angels, prophets, saints and Biblical characters and bring them chocolates and candy.



From Pope Shenouda's Dedication Seremon



I congratulate you all for this beautiful church that accommodates one thousand persons. I have come to America especially to dedicate this church. This is a magnificent church and I waited a long time for its completion. Congratulations to all of you.

I would like to thank the Architects Nabil Selim and Isis Selim

for their beautiful design of the church. I also thank Dr. Saher Mikhail, the treasurer, the engineers Nabih Youssef and Raouf Sidky for their efforts and labor.

I thank the artists Christian Samoila and his wife Christina and everyone who shared in building this church by donations, time or service, seen or unseen. God remembers every one and the Lord will reward all. Also, we cannot forget the long ministry of the three priests of the church, Fr. Gawargious Kolta, Fr. Augustinos Hanna and Fr. Youhanna Alexander who departed just two weeks ago, but I am sure that his spirit is rejoicing with us from heaven.

The first time in history we read about the dedication of the house of God, was when our father Jacob took a stone that he had put under his head in the place of his dream

about the ladder and set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it and he called the name of that place Bethel, in Genesis 28, 18, 19). It was also the first time ever that a place was called the house of God, the house of worshipping God. He said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the House of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

In Exodus 30, the Lord commanded Moses' "to make a holy anointing oil to anoint the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant, the Lamp-stand and the Altar of Incense, the Altar of Burnet Offering to sanctify them. And to anoint Aaron and his sons, and sanctify them that they may minister to Me as priests." (Exod. 30:25-30). In 1 Samuel 10 and 16, the oil was used in choosing kings Saul and David and through these anointments the Holy Spirit rested on them and worked in them (see also 1 Kings 19). In the New Testament we read about the anointment from the Holy one (1 John 2:20) and now we use the Myron oil in consecrating the icons and baptismal fonts and in confirmation.

Finally, I wish to see the church full everyday as today, not just for seeing the Pope and the bishops but for worship, communion and service.

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY **T** R I B U N E

Saturday, September 4, 2004 • www.sgtribune.com

'It looks like Heaven'

By Marianne Love, Staff Writer,

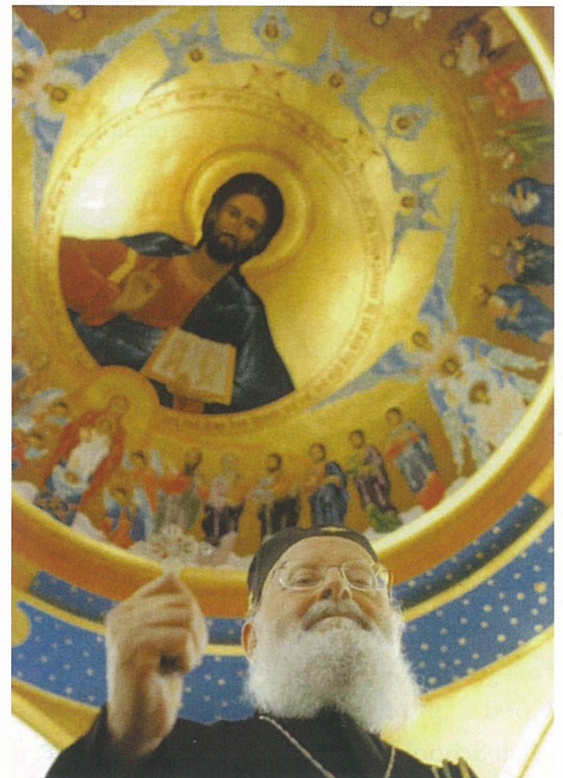
San Gabriel Valley Tribune

Covina-After 13 years of planning and four years of construction, the door of St. John Coptic Orthodox Church have opened.

The white house of worship, with two five-story, 85-foot bell towers and a center reaching 75 feet high, is a place to worship for about 650 families who held festival, carwashes and other fund-raisers to make their dream for a larger more modern church come true.

Church officials said they spent \$7 million to build and furnish the 33,000 square-foot Byzantine-style building with marble imported from Egypt, chandeliers crosses from Russia.

"What matters more is the spiritual, not the material building," said the Rev. Augustinos Hanna, Hanna has been with the congregation since 1988, when the church started with seven families in a nearby rented school room.



MIDDLE EAST EXPERT ERICK STAKELBECK WARNS: 'THERE IS A BULLSEYE ON THE BACK OF EVERY CHRISTIAN LIVING IN EGYPT'



Erick Stakelbeck, author of “The Brotherhood: America’s Next Great Enemy,” discussed the widespread attacks on Christians in Egypt in recent days on TheBlaze TV on Friday.

“Christians, in the birthplace of Christianity, are on the run,” he said. “What we’re seeing right now in Egypt is literally a pogrom, where Christians are systematically being targeted.”

Things were bad under Mubarak he said, but “it has intensified to horrific new levels since the so-called Arab Spring broke out two and a half years ago.”

A picture taken on August 14, 2013, shows the facade of the Prince Tadros Coptic Church after being torched by unknown assailants in the central Egyptian city of Minya. (Photo: AFP/Getty Images)

Stakelbeck tied the recent attacks on Christians to what happened to the country’s Jewish community

in the 1930s. “In 1933 there were some 80,000 Jews in Egypt,” he said. “Today, there are less than 100.” How did that happen? Stakelbeck explained: “In the mid to late 1930s, the Muslim Brotherhood started to gain power and they closely collaborated with the Nazis. The Brotherhood worked with Hitler’s war machine to extend the final solution from Europe to the Jews of the Middle East in North Africa... Today, they want to carry that over to the Christian population.” He suggested the United States speak firmly on the issue, instead of “urging restraint on both sides,” as the administration did after roughly a dozen Christians were “mowed down in the streets of Cairo” in October of 2011.

“Right now there is a bullseye on the back of every Christian living in Egypt,” he warned.

A City on a Hill

Copts Respond with Grace under Attack

By Mary H. Sarkis, MFT



IT WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY the grace, love, self-control, and patriotism that Copts have demonstrated in this chapter of Egypt's history. Persecution is not new to Copts (as is the case with many minorities), but I have never been more proud to be a Copt! Not because Copts are persecuted, but because of the way Copts have responded under attack and what I've seen of the reaction of Egypt's Moslems to Egypt's Christians. When 50-70 churches, Christian schools, orphanages, and monasteries (some ancient) were attacked on August 14-16, ALL eyes were on Copts to see their reaction. Moslem-Egyptian media and public figures like Amr Adeeb, Ibrahim Zeesa, Youssef el Hussein, Fatma Naoout, Tarek Heggy, to name a few, all testified to the Copts' perseverance and loyalty to their country regardless of the horrific abuses that they've suffered, not just now but throughout history. Many moderate Moslems actually apologized to Christians for the Moslem Brotherhood's behavior.

Here's a sample quote from talk show host Youssef El Hussein... «These Copts are a phenomenon that needs to be studied in history. Regardless of how they are used (by politicians), abused, dismissed, scapegoated by their government and the enemies of their religion, they never retaliate. They

are always consistent in their character and their patriotism.» In a nation where everyone is suffering the consequences of the evil distortion of religion, Egypt's Christians have become a model recognized for what true faith is supposed to look like. Egyptians have decried and condemned Islamists' appeal to the world for the break-up of their heavily-armed sit-ins (after 47 days, numerous warnings and the provision of safe exit) as unpatriotic and deceitful. While Morsy's Islamist supporters asked for US/UN military intervention in Egypt, in contrast Copts have for ages endured violence and injustice and when massacred during their peaceful demonstrations (like Maspéro) they never asked the world to retaliate against their country.

Don't think for a minute that any of this was done out of weakness or helplessness! The Coptic community outside of Egypt is large and has a voice. In Egypt, the number of Copts is larger than the number of radical Islamists. If Copts were not peaceful, a civil war would have broken out a long time ago like in Lebanon. But Copts have NEVER used violence or force (not even in self-defense)! I want to leave you with some beautiful gestures from Egypt's Christians that have touched me during this crisis:

- When the attacks against churches began last Wednesday, Egypt's leaders asked Egyptian civilians to go out and protect the churches. In response, Christians and Bishop Makarios (Bishop of the hardest hit area «El Menya») repeatedly refused and went on record saying «Our dear Moslem brothers, please don't go risking your life to protect our churches. Buildings can be rebuilt, and we will rebuild them together. But your blood is priceless and your life cannot be replaced!»

- Pope Tawadros on day 1 of attacks: «They think that by burning our churches they are retaliating against Egypt. In reality it is a redemptive offering that we offer for Egypt's sake and we offer it with love.»

- Metropolitan Mikhail of Assiut (the second hardest hit city): «Our churches today are like a burning censer with fire coming out of it. We pray that God inhales its sweet aroma and has mercy on our beloved land Egypt.»

- Pope Tawadros on Day 3 of attacks: «As an Indian poet once said, 'Love is like incense. It gives out its beautiful fragrance only when thrown in the fire'.»

Please don't forget that churches were not the only thing under attack, heartbreaking stories include the man (in Giza) who was killed and his shop looted for refusing to take down St. Mary's picture from his shop, the taxi driver (in Alexandria) attacked and killed by a mob simply for having a cross hanging in his cab, the boys who were displaced after their orphanage was torched, the nuns who were paraded around town like prisoners of war and sexually harassed, the man who was killed in El Menya then tied and dragged around town by Islamists as an example and warning to others, the 10 yr-old girl who was shot leaving Sunday School, the young priest who was killed in Sinai, the hundreds of Christian homes and businesses that were torched, the churches that were vandalized with graffiti (slurs and curse words used to insult Christians and their Coptic Pope). In addition to the devastating losses the Coptic community has suffered, Egypt's Christians are also suffering as Egyptians with all Egyptians: Mourning the loss of their country as they knew it... the policemen and soldiers who were killed doing their job... the kids who were thrown off the rooftops... the victims of the MB sit-ins who were tortured and killed by / as a result of their leaders' lust for power and Jihadist ideology... parents everywhere who are waiting for their lost children. In addition to being prime targets, Copts are mourning with those who mourn all around them.

Thank you to Egypt's Copts for showing the world a rare example of true Christianity in the 21st century! You are indeed the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden! May God give you the grace to keep enduring, keep loving, keep shining. You are a blessing to Egypt and to Christians everywhere.

You Tell Me I Am Getting Old

When a friend asked him about his health on his eightieth (80th) birthday, President John Quincy Adams replied.

“John Quincy Adams is well. But the house in which he lives at present is dilapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and the seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered and it trembles with every wind. I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it very soon. But he himself is quite well.”

Let me share with you the following poem:

You tell me I am getting old
I tell you that's not so!
The "house" I live in is worn out,
and that, of course, I know.
It's been in use a long, long while;
it's weathered many a gale;
I'm really not surprised you think
it's getting somewhat frail.
The color changing on the roof,
the windows getting dim....
My "house" is getting shaky,
but my "house" isn't me.
My few short years can't make me old.
I feel I'm in my youth....
You tell me I'm getting old?
You just don't understand.
The dweller in my little "house"
is young and bright and gay;
just starting on a life
to last throughout Eternal Day.
You only see the outside,
which is all that most folks see.
You tell me I'm getting old?
You've mixed my "house" with me!

HOW TO BUILD A LASTING SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE (2)



By Fr. Gawargious Kolta

In order to have a successful marriage I must never deliberately do anything to cause my spouse pain or discomfort. Many arguments represent deliberate attempts to degrade and humiliate my spouse, whom I have promised to love, protect and defend. I must do all that is good for my spouse. I must always hasten to do everything that could gladden my spouse's heart. If my spouse hurts me, I must not hurt my spouse in return. Verbal or physical attacks have no place in healthy marriage.

Dr. Harley said that in lasting and successful marriage, the couple must avoid retaliation, or mask punishment by doing certain mistakes; such as I intentionally forget to pick up my spouse after work, or leave my spouse's car at home without gasoline. The loving spouse must not criticize his/her spouse for anything or punish his/her spouse for any mistake. He added that the zero sum games must be out. Unless the couple are both happy, we must not play this game. We must practice to control anger.

Dr. Norman advised us to ask ourselves some questions when we begin to experience anger:

- 1- What am I frustrated about?
- 2- What am I doing to frustrate myself?
- 3- Do I have expectations, needs, or wants that are not being met?
- 4- Does my partner know what they are? Are these needs, wants or expectations necessary?
- 5- Do I have to be frustrated at this time?

If you take the time to answer these questions, it will make a difference in your life. He added that the Bible gives several directives and thoughts about this emotion; that is called anger. St. Paul said: "Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4:31). He also said: "But now you yourself are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth" (Col. 3:8), and also: "Do not let the sun go down on your wrath" (Eph. 4:26).

6- Offering Care to My spouse:

I must learn to meet my spouse's important marital needs. Care is the willingness to change any own personal habits for the benefit of the person, whom I have chosen to marry. I must make sure that those habits are changed, without losing my identity. Learning to meet each other's marital needs is far less complicated than going through fights or separa-

tion. It is difficult to discover my spouse's marital needs, because the marital needs of men and women are often different. This difference confuses and complicates the problem, because men try to meet needs most important to men, and women try to meet needs most important to women. Dr. Harley in his book: "His needs and her needs" mentioned that man's needs in marriage are:

- 1- Sexual fulfillment, which must be satisfying and enjoyable.
- 2- Recreation companionship, that his wife becomes his favorite recreational companion, so that they can enjoy the activities together.
- 3- Physical attractiveness, that his wife tries to keep herself physically fit with diet and exercise wearing fine clothes that have design that he finds her attractive.
- 4- Domestic support, that she achieves by managing household responsibility

in a way that can encourage him to spend time enjoying home. 5- Admiration that she appreciates him more than anyone else, reminding him of his value and achievements, helping him to maintain self-confidence, and avoiding criticizing him. Their home must offer him a refuge from stresses of life. He wants to feel that she is proud of the man whom she chose to marry.

When a man is married to a woman who has learned to meet these needs, he will find her to be irresistible, because these needs are usually essential to man's happiness. I would loike to add another need for men that men like to feel that their wives are not controlling or taking man's position in leading their daily home responsibilities.

Dr. Harley mentioned woman's five most important needs in marriages, which are:

- 1- Affection, that he tells her that he loves her in words, cards, flowers, gifts, and common courtesies. She wants her husband to hug her and kiss her many times every day, creating an environment of affection.
- 2- Conversation that he sits beside her every day to talk to her, about the events of their lives, their kids, their feelings, and their plans.
- 3- Honesty and openness, by telling her everything about himself. He has to describe his daily schedules and his plans for the future, without leaving her with a false impression.
- 4- Financial support by knowing the responsibility to his family. If his income is insufficient to provide essential support, he resolves the problem by upgrading his skill to increase his salary. In the same time he has to encourage his wife to pursue a career, but he must not depend on her salary.
- 5- Family commitment by spending sufficient time and energy for the moral and educational development of the children. He has to help them in their homework, engage in their sports and take them on frequent outings. He has to know that his care for the children is critically important to

her. When a woman is married to a man who has learned to meet these needs, she will find him to be irresistible, because these needs are usually essential to woman's happiness. Dr. Harley mentioned that these categories do not apply completely to everyone, and so believing that all these categories are right to everyone is a big mistake. He added that every spouse must change the habits that cause discomfort to the other spouse. We are all creatures of habit. In marriage, as a couple increases the number of habits that meet each other's marital needs, they improve their compatibility. Dr. Harley also said that women expect more of their husbands, and they want them to take the initiative. They expect their husbands to be romantic, and the love units keep dropping if their husbands do not respond to their needs. They want to spend more quality time with their husbands even when the husbands are tired. If the husbands do not show interest to spend time with their wives, they will lose love units in their wives' love bank. The lack of communication also depletes the love units in the bank of their wives, and husbands must be able to rebuild their wives' love bank accounts. Men expect their wives to do some efforts to keep their marriage successful and make it work. Women must avoid any clouds in their relation with their husbands, and any holes in the leaking ship must be patched seriously using their wisdom, as King Solomon said: "The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish pulls it down with her hands" (Prov. 14:1). Women must try to build up love units every day in their husbands' love bank account. We must evaluate the success of the plan, creating a new plan if the first is unsuccessful. Marriage can be resembled to a big fish net that is stretched across a river. Each day the fisherman comes to take the fish caught in the net and sells them in the market. But along the fish, branches and

debris are caught in the net. There are 3 kinds of fishermen:

A-The first one takes the fish and leaves the debris pile up. Thus the net breaks because of the weight of the debris, and can no longer catch any fish.

B-The second takes out the fish and the debris, but does not repair the net, and eventually holes develop, that let some fish through. Each year he catches less fish.

C- The third one takes the fish and the debris from the net, but also repairs the net that it catches more fish.

The fish are the benefits of marriage, the debris are the annoying habits, and the net represents the habits that meet marital needs.

A- In bad marriage, partners are like the first fisherman. Annoying habits accumulate over time, and the weight of these habits ruins the willingness to meet marital needs, and there are no longer any benefits of marriage.

B- average spouses are like the second kind. Annoying habits are eliminated. But no new habits to meet marital needs are developed, and some of these needs are forgotten. Over time, the benefits of marriage erode.

C- In good marriage, partners are like the third fisherman. Annoying habits are eliminated; forgotten habits that once met marital needs are restored, and new habits that meet marital needs are developed. Year after year the benefits of marriage increase.

7- Schedule enough time to spend with your spouse: For successful marriage, the couple must spend enough quality time with each other. On the other hand, marriage is wrecked when not enough time is spent to meet the spouse marital needs. When a couple is engaged, they spend the majority of their free time together. They call each other and may talk several hours. Without quality time, honesty, protection, care and other marital needs cannot be met. Time is important to create the feeling of romantic love. There are rules of spending time with my spouse:

A- Privacy: The time I planned to spend with my spouse should not include children, relatives or friends. In this time, I can give to my spouse undistracted attention. This can be after the children go to bed. The presence of friends or relatives will not encourage romance. Dr. Harley said that to see a movie or to watch TV does not count because I do not give attention to my spouse, and it does not encourage romance.

B- Objectives: During that time, I can review and practice polices of honesty, protection, and care. I have to create some activities that will meet some important marital needs; such as affection, conversation, recreational companionship and sexual fulfillment. Honesty requires time to explain feelings, personal history, daily activities, and future plans.

Protection also requires time, without violations as short cuts or rejection of negotiation. Care requires time to give my spouse with undivided attention.

For most men romance is sex and recreation, while for women it is affection and conversation. When the four goals come together, both will enjoy romance together.

C- Amount of time we need: I have to choose a number of hours that reflects the quality of my marriage. In healthy marriage, fifteen hours a week will be satisfying. This is important, especially for the newly married couples. The reason that some couples do not find time to spend together is that they are not in love. Problems usually happen with workaholic business men, because they do not have time to have romance with their spouses. They have little hope of restoring the love and the romantic experiences they once had for each other.

Dr. Harley also advises some couples to carry an appointment book with them to write down the time they have set aside to be with each other. If the married couples consider having quality time to be with each other, and consider that it is a matter of priority, their marriage will be very successful.

8- Achieving a shared vision: One of the most important issues of marriage is the vision you share for your relationship. We cannot walk together on the journey of life unless we

(To be continued in page 11)

CONFESSION (2)

“And many that believed came and confessed and showed their deeds.” (Acts 19:18)

By Late Bishop Yoaness

THE THREE ELEMENTS OF CONFESSION

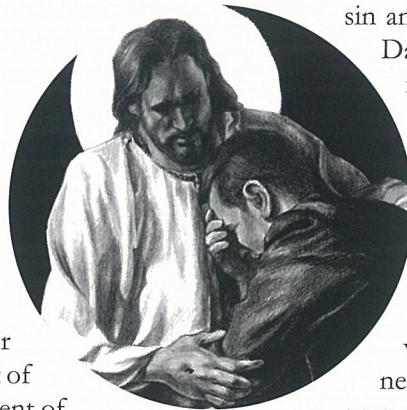
First: Between Me and Myself:

The Importance of Repentance: Confession is the first practical step in repentance. Therefore being sincerely sorry for your sins should

precede confession. There is no meaning for confession without repentance. The Sacrament of Confession, in our church, is called the Sacrament of Repentance. Therefore, confession is not just words you say to the priest, even if these words are truth, but rather it is repentance. Some people who want to have communion go to the priest and ask him for forgiveness and when the priest asks them for their sins, they say, “Thank God, we have done nothing wrong.” or “we took communion last week or since three days,” as if the person does not sin in three days.

St. Kebryanos (the third century) admonished those who came for communion without true repentance, saying, “How do you receive communion without a true repentance and confession and the priest has not laid his hands on you?” We are not talking here about those who receive communion frequently and do not confess every day, but we are talking about those who do not care about confession and say, “Thank God, everything is alright.” They, who hide their sins, do not know themselves and are lying to God. St. John said in his epistle, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and His word is not in us.” (1 Jn. 1:8-10) Those people do not benefit from the prayer of Absolution and furthermore, they add another sin which is taking communion without repentance. We have to be sure that the Absolution prayer without confession and true repentance will not grant us forgiveness of sins. Our confession should be an expression of our being sincerely sorry for our sins. “For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks,” (MATTHEW 12:34) So, when God sees our true repentance, He grants us forgiveness. King Solomon, after finishing building the temple said, “Then hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive and render to each whose heart thou knowest according to all his ways.” (2 Chr. 6:30)

Therefore, repentance is an important step in the Sacrament of Confession. The confessor should feel that he has sinned against the Lord who loved him, therefore, he comes with a humble heart to ask forgiveness for his sins, promising not to



sin anymore and asking God for power and help. David said, “I confess my iniquity, I am sorry for my sin.” (PSALMS 38:18) Jeremiah, the prophet, said, “A voice on the bare heights is heard, the weeping and pleading of Israel’s sons because they have perverted their way, they have forgotten the Lord their God.” (Jer. 3:31)

Sit with Yourself: A perfect confession, which is accompanied by true repentance, needs preparation before going to confess. This preparation is called, “examining yourself”. Sit in a quiet place and examine yourself. Compare how many blessings God has given you and how many times you have denied Him. Compare your life with the life of the saints. Remember St. Peter’s words: “If the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the impious and sinner appear?” (1PETER 4:18) And say in your heart, “Yes, where shall I, a sinner, appear?” All this will give you a broken spirit and will renew your need for the grace of God. Examining yourself will not only give you a broken spirit but will help you remember your sins so you will never forget them. David, after he sinned, said, “My sin is ever before me.” (PSALMS 51:3)

Sometimes we do not know our sins either because we have forgotten them or because we do not examine ourselves and confess frequently, or because we are careless in our spiritual life which causes us to sin without feeling that we are sinning, or for any other reason. In this case, we have to pray to Him to reveal for us our sins. Ask the Holy Spirit to shine the light of His grace upon you and pray with St. Augustine saying, “Lord, grant that I know who You are and who I am.” Our compassionate Lord who is anxious for the salvation of everyone, who is eager for the tears of the lost sheep, will then grant you to remember your sins. At the end of the Chapter, we have a list of some questions to help you confess. If you are that type of person who forgets easily, then it is better for you to write your sins on a piece of paper. If you are afraid somebody might get it, then writ symbols to remind you and not the details. After confession, tear that piece of paper because the Lord has torn your sins.

Sit with God: When you feel the burden of your sins, pray to God with tears and sorrow. Confess to Him all that you have done in detail. God knows all your sins before you even do them, but in confession, you admit your mistakes. David said, “When I declared not my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night, Thy hand was heavy upon me, my strength was dried up as by the heat of

summer. I acknowledged my sin to Thee and I did not hide my iniquity, I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, then Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.” (PSALMS 32:3-5)

In your prayer, speak to God in detail. Talk to Him in a singular form, not plural for this will make you sense your mistakes more, instead of feeling that others too do the same mistakes. For example, when you pray in a personal relationship, do not say, “Lord forgive us our sins for you know that we are sinners and we often are weak and fall in sin.” But instead say, “Lord, forgive me my sins, for You know I am a sinner and I am often weak and fall in sin.” The second prayer has a stronger impression on the ears of God, and much more are the blessings that fill the heart of that person.

Second: In Front of the Priest:

Shyness: One of the most important factors that hinder people from confession is being shy of admitting their sins in front of the priest. We have to overcome that obstacle, for confession is very beneficial in our spiritual life. As long as you were not shy in sinning in front of God, so why are shy now to admit your sin in front of God’s chosen one? Although shyness is a very difficult feeling, it is beneficial for you, for it makes you feel how bad and shameful sin is. These feelings are important for you; for as long as you have enjoyed doing sin, it is better that you suffer in confessing your sins. Therefore, our fathers have said, “The Sacrament of Confession prevents us from sinning again.” The wise Ebn-Sirakh said, “Do not be ashamed in admitting your sins.”

From Whom Are You Shy? Why Are You Shy? A person may have done some similar sins that he is ashamed to mention in front of the priest but you have to know that priests have heard these and similar sins several time before from other people. Besides, the confessor should realize that the priest is used to hearing the bad rather than the good. Shyness may cause some people to ask: “Why do we have to confess to a priest? Why not confess to God directly?” One reason for such a question is pride. A person may appear a saint in front of others and is so concerned with portraying a righteous character. Also, what we have mentioned earlier about importance of the Sacrament of Confession can answer that question. This is a trick from the devil who wants to deny us the many blessings we receive from confession. So, do not listen to him and put away all shyness and pride, and let our main concern be how to obtain the great blessings of confession, which we cannot receive otherwise, for no one, is pure even if his life is one day on earth.

(To be continued)

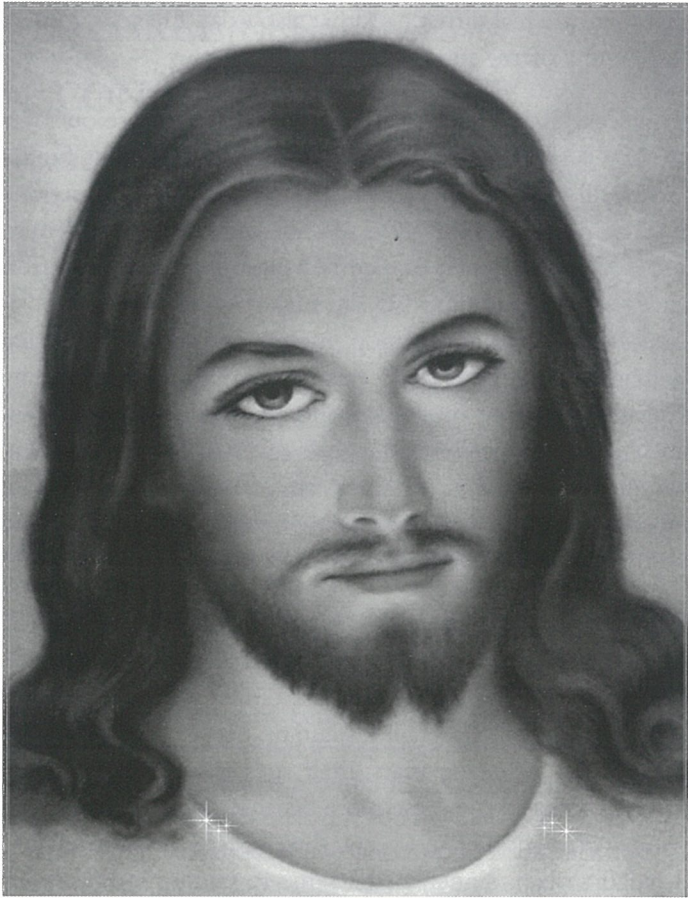
have agreed on a time and place to meet. We must also agree on the direction we are going to take. We should take time to discuss with our partners the markers of our journey and that we are going the right direction. To begin the sharing process, I should share my list of the negatives that I see in myself. I may discover areas where I and my spouse agree. I must know that there are real differences that also exist. I have to respect the identity of my spouse.

In successful and healthy marriages, we do not lose our own identity or personality. Of course it is possible that fundamental differences may exist that tranquilizes against long term compatibility, and serve to undermine a commitment to a shared life together. Sometimes these fundamental differences in goals and purposes are sugar-coated by all the positive things shared in common. A failure to acknowledge that fundamental differences do exist can lead to romance fading under the stress of marital life and may lead to marriage failure. Again we must know the goals of Christian marriage and we must discuss the roadblocks that could prevent us from meeting these goals. These goals are changeable, and depend on the age of the couples.

Rev. Constantine in his book: “Mastering the art of marriage” gave an example for the changeable goals. He said that a group of men 40 years old planned to take dinner together, and they agreed to meet in Top Hill restaurant, because the waitresses were pretty. After ten years, their ages were 50 they agreed to take dinner in the same place because their food was very good. After another ten years, their ages were 60, and they decided to take dinner in the same restaurant because they can eat in peace and quietness. Ten years later, their ages were 70, they met again and took dinner in the same place, because the restaurant was wheelchair accessible, and there was even an elevator. Ten years later, at 80 years old they met again and they agreed to take dinner in the same restaurant, because they have never been there before.

He added that it is normal to have changeable perspectives throughout life. Many relationships may work for a moment in the present. But our lives are more than this moment. It takes a special relationship to last a lifetime. When the wedding is over, the marriage is just beginning. You and your spouse will age, grow, and mature; so will your marriage. We must continue to choose to remain together in the successive stages yet to come. The life changes as we live it together and we will remain together in health or sickness, in richness or poverty. Our marriage must be built on a strong foundation: the presence of Christ in our home, and keeping the commandments that are mentioned by St. Paul in (Eph. 5:22-33). As Christians, we must walk in this life circumspectly as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

GOD IS ALWAYS RIGHT



Short Story

a king, who did not believe in the goodness of God, had a slave who, in all circumstances, said: My king, do not be discouraged, because everything God does is perfect, no mistakes!

One day they went hunting and along the way a wild animal attacked the king. His slave managed to kill the animal, but could not prevent his majesty losing a finger.

Furious and without showing his gratitude for being saved, the king said «Is God good? If He was good, I would not have been attacked and lost my finger.»

The slave replied: «My king, despite all these things, I can only tell you that God is good, and he knows «why» of all

these things. What God does is perfect. He is never wrong!»

Outraged by the response, the king ordered the arrest of his slave.

Later, he left for another hunt and was captured by savages who made human sacrifices!

In the altar, ready to sacrifice the nobleman, the savages found that the victim had not one of his fingers, so he was released. According to them, it was not so complete to be offered to the gods.

Upon his return to the palace, he authorized the release of his slave that he received very affectionately.

«My dear, God was really good to me! I was almost killed by the wild men, but for lack of a single finger, I was let go! But I have a question: if God is so good, why did he allow me to put you in jail?»

«My King, if I had gone with you in this hunt, I would have been sacrificed for you, because I have no missing finger, therefore, remember everything God does is perfect. He is never wrong.»

Often we complain about life, and negative things that happen to us, forgetting that nothing is random and that everything has a purpose.

Every morning, offer your day to God, don't be in a rush.

Ask God to inspire your thoughts, guide your actions, and ease your feelings. And do not be afraid. God is never wrong!

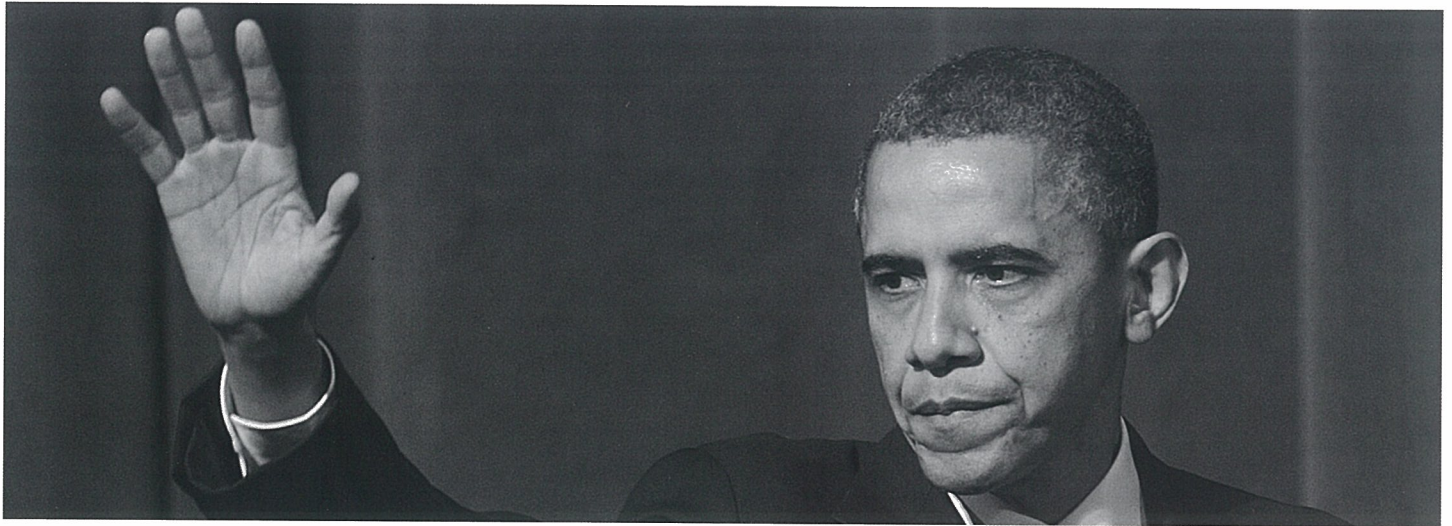
You know why this message is for you? I do not know, but God knows, because he never makes mistakes.....

The path of God and his word is perfect, without impurities. He is the way of all those who trust in Him.

Why have I forwarded this message to you? God alone knows. What you do with this message is up to you. If God puts in your heart the desire to send it to someone, you will forward it. God alone knows why He chose me to send and you to receive this message. May be He wants to bless someone with it.

God is never wrong... God is always right and perfect.

Reader's Corner



Jay Sekulow

ACLJ Chief Counsel

we petition the obama administration to:

Declare Muslim Brotherhood organization as a terrorist group

Muslim Brotherhood has a long history of violent killings & terrorizing opponents. Also MB has direct ties with most terrorist groups like Hamas.

A book by one of their prominent figures, Sayyid Qutb, called *Ma'alim fi-l-Tariq* is the bible for many terrorist groups.

The Muslim Brotherhood has shown in the past few days that it is willing to engage in violence and killing of innocent civilians in order to invoke fear in the hearts of its opponents. This is terrorism.

We ask the US government to declare MB as a terrorist group for a safer future for all of us.

Created: Jul 07, 2013

Issues: Civil Rights and Liberties, Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement, Foreign Policy

Frhanna,

The Obama Administration's foreign policy is imploding.

Today, 19 American embassies are closed under «specific» and «serious» threat of attack from al Qaeda, the enemy that struck America on 9/11.

At the same time, the Administration is sending weapons to the Syrian rebel army, an army dominated by al Qaeda.

Why are we arming the enemy?

Even the liberal New York Times admits that the Syrian rebels are dominated by extremists, with al Qaeda forces running power plants, food production, and setting up Islamic courts.

Syrian rebels have even beheaded a Catholic priest. They've been caught on film committing unspeakable war crimes.

There is no justification for arming jihadists. We must speak with one voice, a voice so loud that even the Obama Administration can hear. Sign our new petition today:

Sign the Petition to Stop American Weapons from Arming American Enemies.

Jay Sekulow
ACLJ Chief Counsel

Summer Contest 2013 (2)

By Fr. Augustinos R. Hanna

Bible (Old Testament)

1. What book is known as “The Book of the beginnings” or the book of origins?
2. Who heard God’s voice in the cool of the day?
3. Who cursed the serpent before anyone?
4. Who was the first tailor in history who made coats of skin?
5. Where in Scriptures, the Cherubim and the Seraphim were mentioned?
6. Who was the first of all the prophets?
7. Who was the first inventor of musical instruments?
8. Who was the oldest man who ever lived?
9. Who wrestled all night without knowing with whom he was wrestling?
10. Who was the first song-writer in the Bible?
11. What great teachings are found in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5?
12. Who was the skilled musician in Saul’s court who married his daughter?
13. Who ate the shew-bread, and who broke this rule?
14. Who were the two Egyptian magicians that resisted Moses, and who told us their names?
15. What was the punishment of blasphemy and insulting the parents in Mosaic Law?
16. Who was the Arabian opponent of Nehemiah who ridiculed the plan to rebuild Jerusalem’s wall and plotted against him?
17. What was the weakness of Samson’s moral fiber?
18. Where did the story of Job start?
19. Who made a navy of ships on the shore of the Red Sea and it was destroyed before sailing?
20. How many prophecies about the Lord Jesus Christ alone were found in the O.T?



Bible (New Testament?)

1. Who were the first Apostles arrested and imprisoned?
2. Who was the first Apostle murdered by Herod?
3. Who was the young man followed Jesus and when the Jews laid hold of him, he fled naked; then later on he was martyred in Alexandria?
4. How many sort of torture that St. Paul was exposed to and mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11?
5. Mention the sufferings, torture and martyrdom of the heroes of Faith found in Hebrew 11?
6. Who is behind the massacre and martyrdom of the children of Bethlehem according to Rev. 12?
7. Who were the two persons in the N. Testament that mentioned the Cross of Christ as a sign to be resisted and the sign of victory of the Son of Man?
8. How and where did the Lord Jesus explain the symbol of the brazen serpent?
9. When St. Paul said in Romans 8, that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ; how many things did he mention?

III. Church History & Dogma:

1. What is the most famous book written by St. Athanasius during his papacy?
2. Who was the first bishop and martyr thrown to the hungry lions; and what is his name’s meaning?
3. Who was the Bishop sent to Ethiopia by the Coptic Orthodox Church, and who was the pope that sent him?
4. What is the name of the saint who took out a thorn from a lion’s foot? And how did the lion show gratefulness to him later?
5. What are the Lord’s Seven Major Feasts; and the Lord’s 7 Minor Feasts honored in our church?
6. Why do we believe that Christ’s Divinity parted not from His Humanity neither a moment nor a twinkling of an eye?
7. What are the most famous two books written by St. Augustine?
8. How to prove (to the Baptists) that the baptism of the children is valid?

Ancient Egyptian Christian Monastery Set Aflame

Jihad Watch

By Raymond Ibrahim , August 15, 2013 in Islam, Muslim Persecution of Christians



As Muslim Brotherhood supporters continue their jihadi rampage on Egypt's Christian churches—several dozens have now been attacked—it's important to remember that their hostility is not simply directed to churches, but any and every expression of Christianity, including crosses, Bible stores, and even remote monasteries. Most recently, for instance, early Thursday morning (Egyptian time), hundreds of pro-Morsi rioters set fire to the Virgin Mary Monastery, also known as Muharraq Monastery, in Quwsaya, Asyut—one of the oldest monasteries in the world, which held many ancient Coptic manuscripts, likely now all turned to ash.

Its flames reached surrounding Coptic Christian homes, setting some 15 aflame.

As I relate in *Crucified Again: Exposing Islam's New War on Christians*, Islamic attacks on Coptic monasteries are as old as Islam's invasion into Egypt itself, that is, nearly 1400 years. Thus the persecution of Egypt's indigenous, most original, inhabitants, the Christian Copts, continues unabated, in the same patterns, and in the name of Islam — that is, in the name of the Muslim Brotherhood, which, to its automaton-like devotees, is synonymous with Islam itself.

WATCH:

The news out of Egypt you probably haven't heard

On this evening's Glenn Beck Program, guest host Laurie Dhue spoke with Sara Carter and Erick Stakelbeck about two very important but seldom discussed stories out of Egypt: the state of U.S. aid and the persecution of Christians.

To begin, Laurie asked Sara to explain, in the wake of President Obama's announcement that we would be canceling our joint military exercises with the country, the state of U.S. military aid to Egypt that totals about \$1.5 billion annually. The U.S. government has not labeled the overthrow of former Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi a coup, in order to continue to provide aid to the Egyptian military, but with violence in the region escalating, it is getting more and more difficult for the Obama administration to ignore the issue.

Sara explained that her sources in the beltway and in the Middle East believe it is all but inevitable that some restrictions will be placed on the U.S. military aid. Stipulations to the aid agreement would allow the U.S. to maintain its leverage with the Egyptian military, which is considered to be vital for the protection of our interests in the region, while taking a stand. Sara elaborates on that argument in the clip below:

On radio this morning, Glenn shared the staggering list of 45 Christian churches and places of worship that have reportedly been destroyed in Egypt. Erick explained that the Coptic Christians of Egypt date back to Biblical times. It is believed that the apostle Mark founded the group, and it is among the oldest Christian groups in the world. While Christianity has been under attack in the Middle East for several decades, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the attacks on Christianity have intensified tremendously – but very few American media outlets are covering it. Why? Erick attributes the lack of media attention to two things:

Advertisement

Historically, the U.S. media has not been pro-Christian

The U.S. media tends to view Muslims as an aggrieved minority. So will Coptic Christians face the same fate the Jewish population of Egypt did during World War II? In the 1940s there the population of Jews in Egypt was 100,000 strong. Today, Erick reports there are less than 100 Jews in the country. The population of Egypt is estimated to be about 84 million and, until recently, at least 10 percent of that population was Christian. Erick offers insight on the future of Christianity in the region below.

Giving Aid to a Coup is exactly what they are doing, here in

America they give money to the needy (most of which they are making needy) to control them. I believe they are giving money to the Muslim Brotherhood in order to try and control them and/or use them in the same way Hitler and the Nazis did. Indeed, the Coptic Christians are becoming a favored scapegoat for the Muslim Brotherhood and when they are massacred then will come Israel.

A Thanks liberalism look at the good you did in Egypt with your support of terrorist or what you call them Muslim brotherhood. I bet they don't even care because they see us Christians as the enemy.

AMany American are not aware that Obama paid \$8 billions to Muslim Brothers representatives visiting the White House to guarantee that part of Sinai would be passed on to Gaza Palestinians. Now that this MB regime has fallen, Obama is in a mess how to defend the payment of this huge payment to a defunct regime. This news is all over Egyptian press and passed on from members of MB who threaten if Obama does not interfere to set their leaders free they would expose his involvement in the crisis!

AMore than fifty years ago Neville Shute wrote the novel *On the Beach*. In it a nuclear WWII began in Egypt. Lets hope he was wrong. A "Why America and the European countries are not building their positions and declarations on what really happens in Egypt – that the MB reflect terrorists' armed attacks on Cairo's streets and other places, which are aimed at terrorizing ALL the citizens, not only Christians." "Americans and European need to strongly reject any interference in Egypt's internal affairs. Unfortunately, such as what we see in remarks and actions of our Administration and Turkish officials, which are aimed at turning public opinion against Egypt and completely ignoring the will of the Egyptian people," The MB Terrorists keep on with their suicidal logic and scorched earth policies on the basis that they have already lost everything, they trying to wear down the army. The military find itself confronted with major flash points in the Sinai and in other cities, and also have to deal with the alarming flow of weapons from Libya, which is out of control today. I cannot believe how we are twisting the truth and using such a kind of words "deeply divided Egypt", what deviation you are talking about! It is a group of Terrorist using religion as a cover against the whole country. I believe the international community currently has a moral and political duty to not abandon the Egyptians during their fight against MB Terrorism.

Christian Copts of California

A MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT OBAMA AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD ARE DESTROYING EGYPT,

AND, IF GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY, THEY WOULD DO THE SAME TO AMERICA.

Since its inception in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood has engaged in bloody Jihad against people of all faiths, and even against Muslims who don't believe in their brand of Islam. When they announced that they abandoned violence, it was just a tactical maneuver to gain acceptance that would enable them to reach their goals.

After their power grab in Egypt following the revolution, their desire to achieve their own agenda made them blind to Egypt's pressing problems, leading the country to the verge of bankruptcy. Twenty-two million Egyptians signed a "Rebel petition" demanding changes. Then, when they saw no action, over 33 million Egyptians took to the streets demanding the ousting of President Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Armed forces had to side with the will of the people and removed him from office.

Thereafter, the Muslim Brotherhood staged sit-ins, occupying two locations in Cairo; Rabaa and Nahda. During their sit-ins which lasted about a month and half, the Brotherhood committed all kinds of atrocities, including torture and murder. They blocked major traffic and made life unbearable for the inhabitants of buildings in the areas. They used adjacent streets as toilets, causing health hazards. They stockpiled heavy weapons and large amounts of ammunition, despite their claim to non-violence.

After giving them several warnings, the police finally decided to disperse them with the use of non-lethal force. This is no

different than our government dispersing the Wall Street Protesters who staged sit-ins across our nation. However, the police have the right to defend themselves against armed militants and deadly force that is used against them, just as they do in any other nation in the world.

The days that followed in Egypt have been violent and chaotic. The Brotherhood has attacked police stations, burned government buildings, and destroyed countless Christian properties. Thus far across Egypt 32 churches have been completely burned, 19 churches have been damaged, 5 Christian schools and 7 church-related buildings were destroyed, along with 190 homes, businesses, hotels and pharmacies owned by Christians. Hundreds of people have lost their lives and thousands have been injured.

President Obama:

The response of the American administration has been disappointing. Trying to lay the blame on both sides, as if they were equally responsible is unfair. Neutrality sometimes can amount to a blatant aggression. We expect you to side with the victims and the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian people and to condemn the terrorist aggressors.

Thank you.



Muslims impose tribute on Egypt's Christians

was taken from Israel today

Now that the attacks on Egypt's Christian churches have subsided, stage two of the jihad — profiting from the fear and terror caused by stage one — is setting in: reports are arriving that the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters are forcing the roughly 15,000 Christian Copts of Dalga village in south Minya province to pay jizya — the money, or tribute, that conquered non-Muslims historically had to pay to their Islamic overlords “with willing submission and while feeling themselves subdued” to safeguard their existence, as indicated in Koran 9:29.

According to one priest from the area, all Copts in the village, “without exception,” are being forced to pay tribute, just as their forefathers did nearly 1400 years ago when the sword of Islam originally invaded Christian Egypt. He said that the “value of the tribute and method of payment differ from one place to another in the village, so that, some are being expected to pay 200 Egyptian pounds per day, others 500 Egyptian pounds per day...”

In some cases, those not able to pay have been attacked, their wives and children beaten and/or kidnapped. As a result, some 40 Christian families have now fled Dalga, becoming displaced.

It's the same in Syria and Iraq. “Rebels” recently went to a Christian man's “shop and gave him three options: become Muslim; pay \$70,000 as a tax levied on non-Muslims, known as jizya; or be killed along with his family.... Androus from Mosul, Iraq, and another member of Father Raymond's congregation, says he received a similar demand via telephone. ‘Because you are infidels, you have to pay jizya,’ he recalled being told over the phone. ‘Either you pay jizya, or we will kill you or your son.’”

Collecting jizya from non-Muslims was interrupted in the 19th century, thanks to European intervention. Today, the jizya and other injustices against Mideast Christians — in Libya, Egypt, Syria, and Iraq — have returned precisely thanks to Western intervention, in this case, U.S. support for the Muslim Brotherhood and its jihadi offshoots.



Congratulations



“Congratulations to the newlywed, **Mark and Monica Saleh**, on your marriage. May our Lord Jesus guide your path together at all times and bless your unity.”

Mr. Mrs, Samir Saleh, Mr.Mrs. Hany Barhoma, Archive Morcos and the rest of your loving family



Congratulations

Andrew Hayashi

We wish you the very best as you enter High School. May God continue to bless your life- Love, **Mom, Dad, brothers Brandon & Matthew**



St. John Church congratulates

Grace Messiha & Mark Selim

for their engagement, praying the Lord Jesus to bless them and complete their marriage in joy and peace. *Congratulations to their families.*



St. John Church congratulates

David Selim and Dr. Julie Hana

on their wedding. May the Lord Jesus Christ bless their life together and grant them joy, peace, love, long life and Christian home built on the Rock of Ages.

The church extends her congratulations also to their beloved two families.



St. John Church congratulates

Beriana

and her mother Heba and her father Victor for her baptism, wishing her growth in health, grace and God's knowledge and love.